The Brethren Evangelist

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ADDRESS,
THE BRETHREN PUB. HOUSE,
ASHLAND, Ashland Co., OHIO.

ASHLAND, O., NOV. 10, 1886.

The Contentions Disposition.

During the week past the pastor of the Evangelical Church, of Ashland called at this office. He is an old acquaintance, and in consequence of the friendly feeling existing between us, our conversation was not reserved.

He inquired whether we received their church paper in exchange. Receiving an affirmative reply, he inquired promptly whether we noticed the discussions that were taking place between their members and ministers on theological questions in the paper. He said he had written to the editor protesting against it, because it had an evil influence. The answer he received was that we had the same experience, and that it was next to impossible to keep it out of a church paper; even though the influence is in a degree pernicious.

Often, in secret meditation, when none but God is near, the thought presses itself forward for consideration, why are we so contentious?

It is hardly possible to find one who has trained his hand in writing upon subjects relating to Christianity, who will write on love, justice and mercy, the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and the powers of the endless life. It must be contention about the cap, the bonnet, the wearing of the hair, the cut of the clothes, a salaried ministry, Christ eating the Passover, immortality of the soul, close communion, or some other subject that does not concern progress in the divine life, or nothing; and the broad field of faith, hope and charity is left to the few babes in Christ, coming into the heavenly kingdom, to cultivate. It would seem that we are yet down in the beggarly elements of the world, and that our re-birth was only a motion without a change.

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members." James 4:1.

"Ye lust and have not: ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not." James 4:2.

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." James 4:8.

"Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold, the judge standeth before the door. James 4:9.

Yes he does; and many who kill, and desire to have, will not be able to obtain.

The first, great anxiety that every man should feel is to save his own soul. That is the chief duty that we owe to ourselves. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and Christ has made it the first law of the Gospel. "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven." After that it is man's duty to go and preach the gospel, baptize and then teach them to observe what Christ commanded. If you obey them, what lack you? Why are we contentious and why do we persist in this thing or contend about that, which is not a part of the "observe" for us to accomplish?

Contention in a religious, family periodical is demoralizing. Its influence amounts to almost nothing in enhancing the Christian work, and accomplishing the purpose that the church is intended.

Let there be a return to ennobling themes of the holy faith. How many of our writers will send in an article on the subject of

THE POWER OF GOSPEL LOVE?

P. S. Since the above was put in type, brother Brown has sent us an article which is published elsewhere, calling for a halt.

All right brother Brown: if we have one brother with us to stand against this variety of pressure upon us, we will stand.

All phases of the communion question have been presented, and we hope now that all will understand that it is a matter wholly with the individual churches to decide for themselves.

We hasten to put in small type he last article that we feel under obligations to publish on the subject, and we therefore second brother Brown's motion, close the door against these discussions, and call for votes to decide whether a penalty shall be exacted of those who transgress. This may not seem exactly parliamentary; but if it is voted to do so it will all be right: and to expedite business we will assume the authority to name Brethren P. J. Brown, of Ohio, S. H. Bashor, of Iowa, and J. B. Wampler, of Pennsylvania, as a Committee to decide who transgresses and shall pay five dollars into the Home Mission fund. We however reserve one article on the "Cap" for brother Mason, and one on the Passover for brother Wilt, which will appear next week.

Now let us have a paper full of gospel love.

EDIORIAL ITEMS.

The South Bend brethren will be ready to dedicate their church early in December.

Several of the brethren of the Ashland Church will attend the lovefeast at Fair Haven next Saturday evening.

We have received from the publisher, H. A. Mumaw, Nappanee, Ind., a copy of "Fireside Readings," and we are free to recommend it to all who want an excellent collection of short essays on moral and religious subjects.

Bro. Mason writes that they had a nice time at their all-day meeting and love feast at Winchester. This sounds very much like the primitive custom, when the Christians came together on the morning of the Lord's day and had meeting all day and a love feast in the evening.

The brethren at Ankenytown expected to dedicate their church last Lord's day. We have not learned whether they succeeded in getting it ready or not for the service. We acknowledge he receipt of a special invitation from the minister, but our other engagements prevented us from attending.

Recently a pretended converted Catholic Priest went to Dublin Ireland and preached such eloquent sermons that the people were led captive. Later it was discovered that he stole his manhood. This man Keatinger consermons and on further investigation he proved to be a first-class fraud. How frequently people are deceived by characters who have fine intellects, but no ducted services, led hymns, read prayers, administered the sacraments, and performed all the duties connected with his office except the marriage ceremony, and then proved to be a scamp of the first water. If people would not allow themselves to become flighty when a stranger, who makes some display, appears in their place so often, such occurrences would not be so frequent.

"One of the greatest objections to formulated creeds and standards is that they become rigid and insoluble. They are not easily opened to revision. They also acquire a fictitious authority. Opinions hardened into dogmas, and dogmas may come to be regarded as infallible truths. On this subject, the Central Christian Advocate (Methodist) remarks very truly: 'The statements of Christian beliefs, which are giving some churches so much anxiety just now, are treated as if they were a later revelation, and had peculiar authority, when they are simply the opinions of good men who lived long ago, and nothing more. They were neither wiser nor more spiritual than some men of today, nor were they quite so well prepared to penetrate to the exact meaning of the Scriptures. The tenacity with which men cling to them shows how deep is the bondage into which men have been brought by an unreasonable doctrine of churchly and ecclesiastical authority."

These remarks are true of those churches which have written creeds, and of other churches that have not.

On the evening of the 1st, the Ashland City church met in business council, and decided to hold a few meetings, commencing Nov. 28th, and a love feast later. Also, by a vote of the church, the Treasurer was authorized to pay to the State Mission Board, five per cent of the monthly offerings, and another five per cent to the educational work of the church. These offerings are made upon the first Lord's day in each month, and every member is urged to give something, and they are urged to teach their children to give also, so that they may form the righteous habit early in life. No basket is passed around, or demonstration made, but at the close of the service on the first Lord's day of the month, each one carries his gift to the altar and leaves it as a free-will offering to the Lord. A portion is set apart for Mission work, a part for the educational work, a part will be for the poor and for superannuated ministers, and the remainder will be used by the church for private purposes. Through this, there will be constantly accumulating funds for church work, and the Lord's treasury will not always be bankrupt. We recommend our churches everywhere to introduce methods of systematic giving for the Lord's work. At this meeting one was received by commendation.

The *Messenger* has condescended to notice an error which was sent to us by a brother residing in the West. The article was published without any signature. We cheerfully copy the item, which corrects the conclusion upon which the article was based.

It is seldom that we take any note of things said in the *Brethren Evangelist*, not because we think it beneath our notice, but to avoid unpleasantness that might arise from criticisms that we might make. We feel that, though we differ on a few points, we are still too nearly alike in faith and practice to labor in any way to injure each other. We profess to be Christians, and ought to act out the Christian spirit. Hence, criticism is in order only when to correct errors. In No. 42, of the above-named paper. the editor gives a half column to tell its readers that the Quinter Brethren, of Kansas, have named their congregation or church, Quinter. After making the usual reference to the Catholic church, and following Romish example, he gives their own church the following advice: "Let the local organizations be distinguished as they were of old; as the church of Ephesus, etc., naming them after the places where they exist rather than after any man." We kindly inform the editor that the Brethren there have done just as he advises, named the church after the town where it exists. Quinter, Kansas, is quite a village for its age, and publishes a weekly paper. The church there was not named after a man, but after a place—a town. If the town was named after a man, neither the man nor the church should be blamed.

Bro. Jno. Nicholson is now holding a meeting at West Union, Iowa.

Bro. E. H. Smith has changed his address from Smicksburg. Pa., to Plumbville, Pa.

Bro. E. L. Yoder is now afflicted with diseased eyes. He is receiving treatment and hopes to recover soon.

The first term of this school year ended at the College last Saturday. It was a term of successful work, and the attendance was very creditable. A new term opened yesterday, and the prospects are that it will be a very interesting one, but as we go to press before it opens, we can give no particulars. We again invite the attention of all who are interested, to the fact that the expense at Ashland College is the lowest, and that the instructors do the best they can to aid the student in making advancement in his studies. A special feature of the coming term is the Business Courses of ten and twenty weeks duration, which afford all an opportunity to acquire a practical knowledge of book-keeping and business methods.

If a man preaches the Gospel earnestly and faithfully the people will understand him and accept it. Nobody said John the Baptist or Jesus was a hypocrite. They were too much in earnest. The people believed them. We should be much in earnest if we expect to be successful.

A Sanskrit proverb says: "Silence is the ornament of the ignorant." The word "ignorant" here has a large scope and must not be confined to the illiterate. The more we consider this proverb, the more truth we see wrapped up in it.

The brethren in San Francisco have sent a long letter outlining their method of work in the Pacific metropolis. It was rather long for the outside, and it will be used in our next. The letter bears evidence that that strong love exists among the brethren there that should mark the followers of Christ everywhere. O that we all could have that love for one another that would bear some resemblance to that love which the Father has for us that he was willing to forgive us even though we are unprofitable servants and sinners.

Sister Sidle is almost alone among our contributors in writing against pride. This is one of the most dangerous sins that the Christian has to guard against, and it should not be forgotten that there is great danger in being led away from the favor of God by it. Humility is a great virtue.

The election is now past and no longer attracts a large share of public attention. But the holidays are now coming on and they will interfere with church work in many places. How many things there are now which draw the mind from the great duties of the religious life.

One thing we all need is the grace of God shed abroad in our hearts more completely than ever. We do not seem to realize that Christ is always present with us and that he beholds every act of our lives. If we did not forget this, often we would act differently from what we do.

Argument of Concession on the Love Feast.

Bingham.—The other oblations [were] partly disposed of in a feast of charity; which all the ancients reckon an apostolic rite accompanying the communion—Antiquities, book 15, chap. 7.

Kitto—Agape, the Greek term for love, used by ecclesiastical writers to signify the social meal of the primitive Christians, which generally accompanied the eucharist. If we reflect on the profound impression which the transactions of "the night on which the Lord was betrayed" must have had on the minds of the apostles, nothing can be conceived more natural, or in closer accordance with the genius of the new dispensation, than a wish to prepetuate the commemoration of His death in connection with their social meal.

Clark—Love feasts were in use in the primitive church till the middle of the fourth century. The love feasts were, at first, celebrated before the Lord's supper: in process of time they appear to have been celebrated after it.—Commentary on Jude.

Bloomfield.—Agape, those sacred meals which at first among the Primitive Christians, preceded the Eucharist, and afterward succeeded it, and to which all, especially the richer furnished their contributions.

Hase.—The love feast, in which were combined the ordinary meal and the religious service of the primitive Christians, was originally celebrated at Jerusalem every day.

At its conclusion the broken bread and the consecrated cup were passed around to every one at the table. In the Jewish Christian congregation the Jewish Sabbath and festivals were observed. Only in congregations composed principally of Greeks, could the members be induced to observe Sunday in commemoration of our Lord's resurrection, and among them no interest could beawakened in those Jewish festivals, which were not connected with some event of the Christian history, to give them additional importance. It is, however, not easy to explain why even Paul and John should have discontinued in such congregations the eating of the Paschal lamb, according to the usages of their forefathers.—Church History, page 41.

To Our Readers.

We cannot too strongly urge upon our readers the necessity of subrcribing for a family weekly newspaper of the first class—such, for instance, as THE INDEPENDENT, of New York. Were we obliged to select one publication for habitual and careful reading to the exclusion of all others, we should choose unhesitatingly THE INDEPENDENT. It is a newspaper, magazine and review, all in one. It is a religious, a literary, an educational, a story, an art, a scientific, an agricultural, a financial, and a political paper combined. It has 32 folio pages and 21 departments. No matter what a person's religion, politics or profession may be, no matter what the age, sex, employment or condition may be, THE INDEPENDENT will prove a help, an instructor an educator. Our readers can do no less than to send a postal for a free speciman copy, or for thirty cents the paper will be sent a month, enabling one to judge of its merits more critically. Its yearly subscription is $3.00 or two years for $5.00.

Address, THE INDEPENDENT, 251 Broadway, New York City.

1887. 1887.

The Brethren Evangelist.

THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST will be published during the year 1887, as it has been during the past year. Its size will be the same and the general make up similar. We have done what we could to give the Church a good paper; and with the experience of the past and with encouraging prospects for the future, we hope to discharge our duties more satisfactorally than heretofore, and give our patrons a paper more ably edited, and better adapted to the wants of the church.

We have endeavored to be as impartial in our treatment of all as the frailties of human character and feeble judgment make possible. The rule that governs in our editorial work is never to allow friendship or enmity to color in the slightest any thing we publish; but to speak truthfully and as before God and man. There is no other way to conduct a Christian, honest and true paper. An editor should favor his veriest opponent if he thought him in the right; if he thought his best friend in the wrong, he should oppose him.

Christian moderation shall be sought as a companion in our labors, and true Christian progression as the great aim of our work, and we invoke divine aid that charity may be our faithful guide. We want to satisfy our own conscience in all things that concern our salvation and Christian duty, and we desire to grant with gladness sufficient liberty to all others, an equal right.

During the past year many of our dear brethren and sisters have given us their hearty cooperation in circulating the EVANGELIST. For this kindness we offer our grateful thanks, and feeling that their aid is indispensible, we heartily invite all to do what they can to give us an increased list of readers for 1887. The success of our work depends in a measure upon the circulation of the EVANGELIST. The prosperous churches of the Brotherhood are the ones where our church paper is generally read. Its influence is paramount in maintaining the proper zeal for the Cause, and for this reason, every minister in charge of a church should make a special effort to have his people supplied with this source of spiritual encouragement. We trust a united and vigorous effort will be made by brethren and sisters to give the EVANGELIST an increased circulation next year. Now is the time work should be commenced, as it will be sent free to new subscribers the remainder of the year.

THE EVANGELIST will be published every week during 1887, for $1.50, and a commission will be given to agents and solicitors. Particulars will be sent on application.